



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Academics Urge EU Action Over Várhelyi's Espionage Allegations**

[The Good Lobby Profs](#) - a network of over 60 university professors from more than 30 countries committed to defending the rule of law in Europe - have today addressed two open letters to the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and to key committees of the European Parliament, urging them to take immediate and transparent action in light of the [latest revelations](#) concerning Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi's spying operations targeting EU institutions while serving as a senior diplomat at the Hungarian Permanent Representation to the EU. While Commissioner Várhelyi has denied these allegations, the former head of the Hungarian intelligence services has [confirmed](#) to the media that such operations took place.

The letters argue that under Article 17(7) of the Treaty on European Union, the Commission President bears the responsibility to assess and continuously monitor the suitability of Commissioners, including their independence as required by Article 17(3) TEU. They urge the Commission President to clarify what steps she will take to assess the credibility of these allegations, as she is required to maintain the necessary confidence in each member of her College. These include (i) to ask for Olivér Várhelyi's voluntary resignation, as foreseen by Article 17(6) TEU; (ii) in case the Commission President declines such a request, she must publicly explain that decision to Parliament in line with the Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the Commission; (iii) should Várhelyi refuse to resign, the Commission must refer the matter to the Court of Justice under Articles 245 and 247 TFEU to seek mandatory resignation and related sanctions.

"These allegations prove that Mr Várhelyi might have never been fit for the job of EU Commissioner. As a result, he should not only be dismissed but his vacancy not filled by the Council of the EU upon von der Leyen's demand" - said Professor Alberto Alemanno, on behalf of the signatories.

Copies of both letters - to the European Commission and the European Parliament - are publicly available.

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